



LAWG Condemns a Guatemalan Court Decision to Reincarcerate José Rubén Zamora

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The [Latin America Working Group](#) strongly condemns a recent decision by a [Guatemalan appeals court](#) to overturn a house arrest order and reincarcerate José Rubén Zamora, a 68-year-old journalist with a distinguished career exposing corruption. This latest ruling underscores the grave threats facing independent journalism and the rule of law in Guatemala.

Zamora, founder of *El Periódico*, was jailed on July 29, 2022, during President Alejandro Giammattei's administration, just five days after publishing sharp criticisms of the president and denouncing allegations of state corruption. In 2023, Zamora was accused of money laundering and sentenced to six years in prison. Since his jailing, Zamora has faced over [800 days](#) in prison without a trial or confirmed conviction. Although Zamora was granted house arrest in October 2024 due to the excessive duration of his pretrial detention, the appeals court has now [reversed](#) this order, forcing him back into pretrial incarceration. This decision comes despite the fact that his original six-year sentence for alleged money laundering was overturned in October due to procedural errors.

These actions are emblematic of a deeply [co-opted justice system](#), as Zamora himself [predicted](#) after his brief release. His imprisonment and relentless prosecution signal an alarming attempt to silence journalists, human rights defenders, and rights organizations. Furthermore, the injustices against Zamora highlight a trend within the Guatemalan political system that criminalizes and silences free speech.

We call on the Guatemalan government and judicial authorities to respect international human rights standards, drop the baseless charges against Zamora, and end the *pacto de corruptos*' ongoing persecution of civil society. We urge the international community to remain vigilant in monitoring press freedom in Guatemala and to hold accountable those who weaponize the legal system to suppress dissent.